

# **UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS**

## **VOTING ACTION PLAN 2008-2009**

### **I. PURPOSE**

To implement the Federal Functions of the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA), administer the provisions of DoD Directive 1000.4 (Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP)), and MCO 1742.1A (Voter Registration Program), disseminate information and guidance, and coordinate tasks related to the Voter Registration Program.

### **II. OBJECTIVE**

To ensure that all Marines, their family members, Marine Corps civilian employees, and their authorized family members, who are absent from their voting residence, are provided all necessary voting information, including voting age requirements, election dates, Federal officers to be elected, constitutional amendments, other ballot proposals, and information on absentee registration and voting procedures. This Voting Action Plan does not supersede MCO 1742.1A. The Voting Action Plan should be used in concert with MCO 1742.1A.

### **III. TASKS**

A. Deputy Commandant for Manpower and Reserve Affairs shall:

1. Ensure continuing command support to all levels of the Voting Assistance Program.
2. Coordinate and provide information concerning all aspects of the Absentee Voter Registration Program.
3. Establish and maintain the Marine Corps Voting homepage. The Voting homepage will provide specific information regarding upcoming elections. The Marine Corps Voting Homepage will also provide links to all Marine Installation and Major Command Voting Officers, links to other government voting websites, including a link to the Federal Voting Assistance Program website, and will also provide guidance for ordering voting materials.

4. Advertise the FVAP Workshop schedule throughout the Marine Corps.

5. File an "After Action Report" by 15 January 2009 to the Director, FVAP, summarizing successes and/or problems experienced in the conduct of the Voting Program.

6. Revise MCO 1742.1A or other procedural guidance on voting assistance as necessary.

B. Major Command Voting Officer (MCVO) shall:

1. Ensure continuing command support at all levels of the Voting Assistance Program.

2. Coordinate and provide information concerning all aspects of the Absentee Voter Registration Program.

3. Ensure Voting Assistance Officer's (VAO) are appointed and trained at every level of command.

4. Ensure commanders provide VAO's adequate time to perform VAO duties. The MCVO is responsible for coordinating the program with all subordinate units and tenant commands.

5. Ensure VAO designations are in writing. When Marines, including non-commissioned officers, are designated as VAO's, they are authorized to administer oaths in connection with registration and voting.

6. Ensure senior command support for FVAP training workshops and orientations held at the installation, emphasizing attendance of every VAO stationed at the installation. The host Installation Voting Assistance Officer's (IVAO) will invite VAO's from tenant commands and from nearby installations. A senior officer, Colonel or above, will be designated to represent the installation/command and introduce the program.

7. Performance as a VAO will be documented on the Marines' Fitness Report. Commanders shall establish the evaluation criteria for VAO's performance within their command.

8. Ensure recruits are provided a Federal Post Cards Application (FPCAs) for themselves and their voting age dependents during recruit training.

9. Ensure that all Marines receive at least one briefing/training period, devoted to the absentee voting process during recruit training and within all leadership curricula, and again, in each year that elections for federal office are held. Emphasis should be placed on the availability of voting information, supporting materials, personal assistance, and the importance of registering and voting.

10. Ensure that special emphasis is given to the week of August 31 - September 7, 2008, "Armed Forces Voting Week" to encourage voters to register to vote.

11. Ensure that special emphasis is given to the week of October 12-18 2008, as "Absentee Voters Week" to encourage voters to complete and mail their absentee ballots so that they are received by local election offices in time to be counted for the November general election.

C. Installation/Unit Voting Assistance Officers (IVAO/UVAO) shall:

1. Encourage and assist all eligible voters.

2. Be readily available and equipped to provide personal assistance to voters for federal, state, local, and other jurisdictional elections during 2008-09. Persons needing assistance in reading or understanding any voting material will receive immediate assistance in the appropriate language.

3. Have a minimum of one UVAO assigned for every two hundred Marines in the unit.

4. Designate at least one well-advertised, fixed location on the base, installation, or ship announcing where absentee voting materials and assistance may be obtained. Locations may include Legal Assistance Offices, Family Service Centers, and Community Centers.

5. Attend a FVAP Workshop. Workshops will be held at military installations in the continental United

States and overseas locations. If the VAO's installation is not scheduled to receive FVAP Workshop training, VAO's can attend training at any nearby installation regardless of service hosting the training. VAO's stationed at remote locations can access the FVAP website for training or request a training CD from the SVAO.

6. Conduct local training workshops during election years for federal offices

7. Ensure availability of FPCA's for all eligible voters. Ensure delivery of FPCA's is made in accordance with MCO 1742.1A, ENCLOSURE 1, PAR 3.

8. Ensure that Marines are afforded the opportunity to complete FPCA's upon checking-in/checking-out of their respective unit and ensure sufficient copies of the FPCA are included in orientation packets for new and permanent change of station (PCS) personnel. All deployed personnel will be provided the opportunity to complete a FPCA prior to deployment.

9. Encourage access to the Marine Corps Web Site ([www.manpower.usmc.mil/voting](http://www.manpower.usmc.mil/voting)) and the FVAP Web Site ([www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov)) to obtain voting information and materials. If internet access is not available, ensure that voting information and related materials such as the 2008-09 Voting Assistance Guide, and changes thereto; necessary quantities of the FPCA, and Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB), are obtained and disseminated in accordance with MCO 1742.1A.

10. Recommend changes to command directives or instructions on voting assistance as necessary.

11. Provide for continuing evaluation of command voting program.

12. Ensure that special emphasis is given to the week of August 31 - September 7, 2008, "Armed Forces Voting Week" to encourage voters to register to vote.

13. Ensure that special emphasis is given to the week of October 12-18 2008, as "Absentee Voters Week" to encourage voters to complete and mail their absentee ballots so that they are received by local election

offices in time to be counted for the November general election.

D. Inspector-Instructors shall:

1. Coordinate with the IVAO, MCVO and SVAO to maintain a contingency Absentee Voting Program for reserve units and personnel who have been activated and deployed. The contingency implementation Absentee Voting Program shall ensure that all deployed personnel (Active and Reserve) are able to exercise their absentee voting rights. The scope of the program should include the availability of adequate supplies of the 2008-09 Voting Assistance Guide, FPCAs and FWABs.
2. Ensure a VAO is appointed within each activated reserve unit to serve as a liaison with the IVAO, MCVO and SVAO.

**IV. SCHEDULE**

**A. PHASE I:** Preparation and Initiation during Period of September 1, 2007 - Spring 2008.

1. Commanders at all levels of command shall encourage access to the Marine Corps Voting Web Site ([www.manpower.usmc.mil/voting](http://www.manpower.usmc.mil/voting)) and FVAP Web Site ([www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov)). If Internet access is not available, ensure that voting information and related materials such as the 2008-2009 Voting Assistance Guide (VAG) and necessary quantities of the FPCA and FWAB are obtained and disseminated in accordance with MCO 1742.1A.
2. Commanders at all levels of command shall ensure procurement and distribution of FPCA's and FWAB's through normal supply channels.
3. Commanders at all levels of command shall provide Installation telephone operators with the name, mailing address, e-mail, and office telephone number of the MCVO and IVAO by January 1, 2008. The MCVO and IVAO shall generate and maintain a directory containing names and office telephone numbers of all local UVAO's, including tenant organizations, January 1, 2008.
4. The Inspector General of the Marine Corps, through scheduled command inspections, shall review command

voting assistance programs, plans, and determine whether unit Voting Assistance Officers are appointed and trained in accordance with MCO 1742.1A and have sufficient supplies to provide voting assistance.

5. Commanders at all levels of command shall coordinate information efforts. All Commands shall conduct command information briefing prior to primary elections to inform and motivate military/civilian personnel and their family members to exercise their right to vote in primary and general elections. Information provided shall include dates of scheduled primaries and general elections and state deadlines for voter registration, absentee ballot requests, and the receipt of returned, voted ballots. Information programs should utilize local websites and installation newspapers. A well-fixed location will be established and display voting information along with MCVO/IVAO's name, phone, e-mail address, and office location. Libraries, medical and dental clinics, commissaries, exchanges, MWR facilities, schools, and training facilities should be considered as excellent places to display voting information.

6. Ensure that a FPCA is directly delivered to all Marines and their eligible family members, all civilian Marines stationed overseas, and their eligible family members by January 15, 2008. The FPCA may be delivered either in hand or through electronic means. When the FPCA is delivered, the UVAO needs to ensure that instructions are given on the purpose and proper completion of the FPCA.

**B. PHASE II:** Registration and Primary Elections during Period of January - October 2008. This phase will require careful planning and execution of voting assistance programs in order to inform potential voters of the primary elections scheduled to begin in early 2008. Commanders at all levels of command shall:

1. Have VAO's attend a Voting Assistance Workshop and will concentrate on providing absentee registration and voting assistance to personnel and eligible family members for Federal, state, and run-off primary elections.

2. Ensure that all Voting Assistance Officer have an adequate supply of FPCA's and FWAB's.

2. Ensure FPCA's are made available to Marines, civilian Marines, and their family members stationed overseas by August 15, 2008.

3. Ensure FPCA's are made available to all eligible voters within the United States by September 15, 2008.

4. Conduct "Armed Forces Voters Week" (week of August 31 - September 7, 2008). Develop programs to create voting awareness and to motivate absentee voters to participate in the general election. Publicize the importance of early action and planning well in advance of election deadlines by the absentee voter in order to obtain their ballot for the General Election. Publicize the last date before a Federal General Election that an absentee ballot mailed from the location can reasonably be expected to be delivered to the appropriate state and local election officials.

5. Conduct "Absentee Voters Week" (week of October 12-18, 2008). Encourage all Marines and their family Members to vote and mail their absentee ballots during this week.

6. Continue command information programs and dissemination of voter information.

**C. PHASE III:** Requesting Ballots for the General Election During Period of July - November 4, 2008. Commanders at all levels of command shall:

1. Continue disseminating voting information.

2. Ensure availability of FPCA's and FWAB's to eligible voters within the United States by September 15, 2008.

3. Communicate how and when to use the FWAB and recommend its use if the voter meets established criteria and does not receive the regular absentee ballot in sufficient time to vote and return it to be counted.

**D. PHASE IV:** Evaluation Period, November 5 - December 31, 2008). Commanders at all levels of command shall:

1. Assist as requested, with post-election surveys of eligible voters. The survey's findings will be used in formulating plans for future voting assistance programs.
2. Coordinate voting information support materials with Service Voting Action Officer (SVAO) in support of requirements as directed by the Director, FVAP.
3. File an "After Action Report" by December 31, 2008 with the SVAO summarizing successes and/or problems experienced in conduct of the program. A checklist for and the format of this report will be provided by the SVAO.

## **V. ESSENTIAL MATERIALS**

A. 2008-09 Voting Assistance Guide (VAG 2008-09). The 2008-09 Federal Voting Assistance Guide is the basic reference that provides all VAO's with the necessary information to provide potential voters the following assistance:

1. Explanation of current procedures for absentee registration and voting in each state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the territories of American Samoa, Guam, and the Virgin Islands.
2. Absentee registration and voting deadlines established by the states, territories, and other jurisdictions, along with dates of primary and general elections.
3. Addresses, including zip codes of local election officials in each state, territory, and other jurisdictions.
4. Provides guidance on the use of the FPCA.

B. Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) for Registration and Absentee Ballot Request (Standard Form 76).

1. The FPCA, a postage-paid form, is authorized by law for use by persons covered by the UOCAVA. The FPCA was revised in October 2005 to include more information and to make the form more user friendly. The previous edition of the FPCA (Rev. 10-95) may continue to be used



until existing stocks are exhausted. The FPCA (Rev. 10-95) should be placed in an envelope with proper postage affixed to protect enclosed personal information.

2. Due to difference in the use of the FPCA by the various states and other jurisdictions, the 2008-09 Voting Assistance Guide should be consulted to determine how each jurisdiction authorizes use of the FPCA by voters.

3. FPCA's are requisitioned in accordance with MCO 1742.1A enclosure 3 or purchased directly from the General Services Administration (GSA).

4. An on-line version of the FPCA that is accepted by all 50 states, the District of Columbia and territories is available at the Marine Corps voting Web Site ([www.manpower.usmc.mil/voting](http://www.manpower.usmc.mil/voting)) and the FVAP Web Site ([www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov)).

a. The on-line version provides an alternative to individuals who cannot obtain the card stock version and must be placed in an envelope with proper postage affixed.

C. Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB) (SF 186).

1. The FWAB is authorized by law and may be used in general elections for federal office by uniformed service voters and by overseas voters who make timely application for, and do not receive, regular absentee ballots. For those who wish to use the FWAB, the following criteria must be met:

a. The request for a regular absentee ballot must have been received by the local election official at least 30 days before the general election or the state deadline, whichever is later. Some states may allow FWAB use in primary and run-off elections; see the 2008-09 Voting Assistance Guide for details.

b. The FWAB may be submitted by uniformed service personnel and their family members when absent from their voting residence and located either inside or outside the U.S., and by other U.S. citizens when located outside the United States. The United States is defined as the 50 states, the District of

Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands, and American Samoa.

c. The FWAB must be received by local election officials no later than the deadline for receipt of regular absentee ballots under state law.

2. All Marine Corps installations outside the U.S., including Marines on naval vessels at sea, should stock a sufficient supply of FWABs for use by voters outlined above. Consult the 2008-09 Voting Assistance Guide for detailed instructions on the FWAB.

NOTE: ONLY THOSE VOTERS WHO MAKE A TIMELY APPLICATION FOR THEIR REGULAR STATE BALLOT AND MEET ALL THE CRITERIA MAY USE A FWAB.

**VI. FVAP POINT OF CONTACTS:**

Director  
Federal Voting Assistance Program  
Department of Defense  
Washington, DC 20301-1155

Telephone number: (703) 588-1584  
DSN 425-1584, 1-800-438-8683  
E-mail address [vote@fvap.gov](mailto:vote@fvap.gov)  
Home Page: [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov)  
Fax number: (703) 696-1352  
Fax DSN: 426-1352

**VII. USMC VOTING POINTS OF CONTACT:**

SENIOR SERVICE VOTING REPRESENTATIVE (SSVR)  
Mr. Timothy R. Larsen

SERVICE VOTING ACTION OFFICER (SVAO)  
Mr. David E. James  
[david.e.james@usmc.mil](mailto:david.e.james@usmc.mil)

USMC VOTING HOT LINE  
<mailto:mra.voting.officer@usmc.mil>  
DSN: 278-9511  
Comm: (703) 784-9511

### MAJOR COMMAND VOTING OFFICES

MARFORCOM	Comm: (757) 836-1524	DSN: 836-1524
MARFORPAC	Comm: (808) 477-8465	DSN: (315) 477-8465
MARFORRES	Comm: (504) 678-0428	DSN: 678-0428
NCR	Comm: (703) 784-2151	DSN: 278-2151
MCRC	Comm: (703) 784-9431	DSN: 278-9431
MARLOGCOM	Comm: (229) 639-5400	DSN: 567-5400
MARFOREUR	Comm: 011-49-7031-15-2902	DSN: (314) 431-2902
MARFORSOUTH	Comm: (305) 437-2540	DSN: None
MARFORCENCOM	Comm: (813) 827-7022	DSN: 651-7022
MARFORKOREA	Comm:	DSN: (315) 723-7032
MARFORSTRAT	Comm: (402) 232-9280	DSN: 272-9280
MARSOC	Comm: (910) 232-9280	DSN: 751-9070